

# THE WORKPLACE DIGNITY INITIATIVE

The Workplace Dignity Initiative is a programme of the Work Trauma Foundation that is set to revolutionise the "people factor" in the workplace.

By adopting the Workplace Dignity Initiative an enterprise effectively announces that they are "a good place to work" and that their business practices are transparent and represent the highest level of integrity on all levels.

While remuneration is important for employees, it is better to work at a "good place" where the employee is valued, developed and treated with respect and dignity.

Clause 10 of the South African constitution recognises the inherent dignity of the individual. The Workplace Dignity Initiative is aimed at giving meaning and substance to the constitutional clause by leading enterprises to achieve just that in their people management.

The Workplace Dignity Initiative is about sustaining a highly productive workforce and retaining this momentum in performance by preventing problems in the first place. The programme is flexible and can provide for every scenario that could be created within the organisation or forced on the organisation through external factors.

The Workplace Dignity Initiative goes beyond vision and mission statements, beyond good intentions that are so often obscured by a lack of know-how to ensure implementation and monitoring.

One can say that a programme like the Workplace Dignity Initiative would prevent scandals like ENRON and other cases of bad corporate governance because people management - and not financial difficulties -

were at the heart of these scandals.

The thrust of the Workplace Dignity Initiative is:

A commitment to sustainable people development by the organisation and the signing of a declaration to this effect:

Transparency and the effective management of power:

Ratification of relevant ILO conventions:

Monitoring organisational climate, culture, communication and psychosocial problems through empirical research;

Adopting the ILO'S SOVE programme to address psychosocial problems in the workplace with subsequent policies;

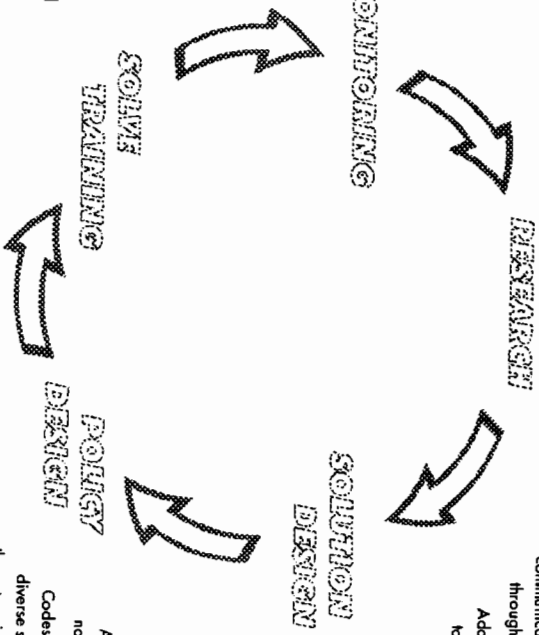
Training of employees on all levels to uphold the codes of the Workplace Dignity Initiative and to address any problems that may be experienced from time to time;

Assistance to the enterprise in developing a reporting system in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative standards;

Assistance to manage change in a non-traumatic manner;

Codes of Good Practice for different and diverse scenarios or problems that may face the enterprise enabling them to act within structures and with the dignity of the employee as a paramount consideration under all circumstances.

The Workplace Dignity Initiative does not only focus on the wellbeing of the employee, but on the moral and financial wellbeing of the enterprise as a whole.

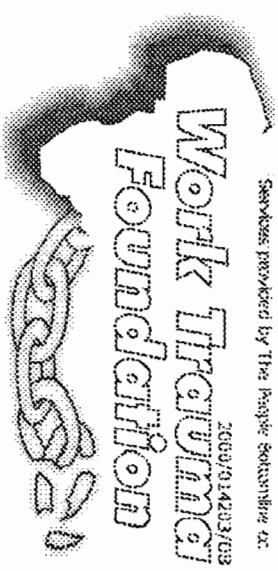


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Services provided by The People Rebuilding Co.

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C o m m u n i t y f o u n d a t i o n s e c o n n e c t i n g w o r k p l a c e s

## Dr Susan Steffmann

Ph.D. (2002). Title of thesis: "Workplace Violence in the Health Sector of South Africa"; MBA (2000); BA (1985); National 3-year Technikon Diploma in Commerce (1981).

### EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Susan founded the Work Trauma Foundation to raise awareness of the topic in South Africa. She researched workplace violence (physical and emotional), conflict, interpersonal relationships and retrenchments in South Africa extensively, provides support services (counselling and legal) for victims, presents workshops, undertakes strong advocacy, organises conferences, writes articles and books and has created a forum for international researchers and recognised top experts worldwide to discuss workplace violence.

Susan consults on workplace violence and HR issues such as retrenchments, interpersonal conflict and communication, and conflict resolution.

Susan is a recognised international keynote speaker on workplace violence of the most prestigious conferences and is extensively published both in South Africa and around the world.

Susan was awarded an ASHOKA Fellowship recently, recognising her as a "leading social entrepreneur". She is a trained conflict facilitator for the International Labour Organization (ILO) programme, SOLVE, for addressing psychosocial problems in the workplace and was elected the National Project Coordinator for SOLVE in South Africa.

Susan created awareness of and pioneered workshops dealing with workplace violence in South Africa. She built research capacity for the Foundation and assists post-graduate students in research.

Susan and the Work Trauma Foundation have assisted approximately 4000 victims of workplace violence since 1994 and established numerous support groups.

Susan initiated and arranged the first international conference on workplace violence in South Africa in 2000, authored the first book on workplace violence in South Africa and initiated and hosts the first and only international internet discussion group involving experts all over the world on workplace violence.

Susan was commissioned and sponsored by the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organisation, Public Services International and the International Council for Nurses to conduct the first survey on workplace violence (health sector) in South Africa - this is also the first doctoral thesis in South Africa on the topic. The Foundation went on to assist the ILO/MHO/ICN/PSI in compiling guidelines to prevent workplace violence in the health care sector in April 2002.

## The ILO SOLVE Programme

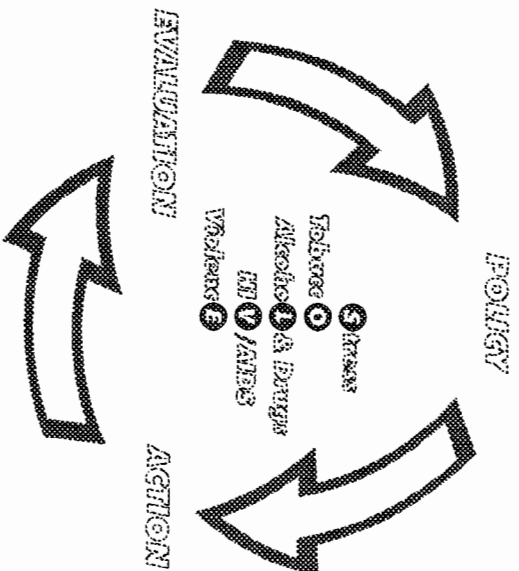
The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has developed a programme to address the policy requirements and actions required in reducing the negative impact of psychosocial problems - Stress, Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs, HIV/AIDS and Violence (SOLVE).

The SOLVE methodology is designed to allow an organisation or an enterprise to integrate psychosocial issues into overall enterprise policy and establish a framework for preventative action.

The ILO, with its tripartite structure and its leadership in occupational safety and health is in a unique position to develop and support activities which translate concepts into policies and policies into action at the national and enterprise level.

Specific action is developed through MicroSolve packages which target each of the five identified areas of SOLVE.

MicroSolve is the action-based follow-up to SOLVE while a five-day SOLVE policy workshop works towards establishing a comprehensive enterprise-wide policy, the MicroSolve modules address action measures relating to the five psychosocial problems covered in SOLVE.



## Work Trauma Foundation

The Work Trauma Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to minimising and eliminating violence and other psychosocial problems in the workplace.

This organisation is led by an ASHOKA fellow who is also the National Project Coordinator for International Labour Organisation's (ILO) programme, SOLVE dealing with psychosocial problems in the workplace.

Apart from its success in raising awareness, achievements in its advocacy role, the promotion of its Code of Good Practice to Prevent and Deal with Workplace Violence, the Work Trauma Foundation incorporated SOLVE into the Workplace Dignity Initiative providing for its full range of services; namely:

- An advisory and psychological counselling service for victims of workplace violence;
- Legal clinic;
- Various training programmes;
- Policy development;
- Research and monitoring levels of psychosocial problems;
- Corporate governance.

The Workplace Dignity Initiative project is expected to develop into a prestigious local and international association of enterprises subscribing to a spirit of dignity and respect in the workplace to form part of the new drive towards sustainable people development.

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